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ABSTRACT

This paper describes the first phase of a research study that examined (1) how superintendents define and select their administrative teams; (2) how team values are conceptualized by superintendents; (3) how "trust" is defined and its value perceived by superintendents; and (4) whether or not gender influences the way superintendents define "team" and "trust." The paper begins by citing previous research on differences between men's and women's understandings of the team concept. The potential impact of these differences on men's and women's abilities to trust each other is noted. The paper then describes the study methodology, explaining the selection of the five male and five female superintendents studied, their professional backgrounds, the nature of the interviews to which they submitted, the makeup of their administrative teams, and their stated reasons for selecting male or female team members. The next section of the paper reviews their definitions of the team concept and relates these definitions to gender-specific definitions identified in previous research. The final section of the paper reviews definitions of trust provided by the superintendents and examines the importance they set on trust as a team value. Eleven references are cited. (PGD)

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The Administrative Team, Trust & Gender

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The Administrative Team, Trust & Gender

Introduction

In the past twenty years the concepts of team management, team building and participatory management have grown in importance and application as effective management approaches at all levels of the corporate organization. The work of Ouchi (1981), Kanter (1983), Patten (1981), and Belbin (1981) reflect this development and reveal the reasons why team management has grown as an important pattern within the bureaucratic organization.

This trend in the management of industrial organizations is applicable to the experiences of men and women in the administration of schools. While the management hierarchy of the education organization may not be as complex as large industrial organizations, the concepts of participatory management and team management have become important components for the management of school districts.

Studies of public schools note that most school districts are administered by superintendents who say they rely on the assistance of administrative teams. (Akenhead, 1985, p.22) This shared approach has been and will continue to be necessitated by demands for innovation and change, increasing mandates from local, state and federal agencies, and the rapidity with which decisions must be made.

The size and composition of the education administration

team is determined by the superintendent in each district. While there is variation from one district to another, most teams are usually comprised of assistant superintendents and other central office administrators. In some districts building principals are also included on the teams. These educational administrative teams, like corporate organization teams, are male dominated. Studies show that while the number of women in top educational administrative positions has increased somewhat in the last decade, men still overwhelmingly dominate the management teams administering public schools. (Shakeshaft, 1987) A report in the Executive Educator in July 1985 indicated that over 95% of all superintendents, 91% of all central office administrators, 93% of all secondary principals and 81% of all elementary principals are men.

I believe that this disparity emanates from the divergent behavioral orientations and conceptual perspectives about team play, team membership, team work and the value of trust that males and females develop in the socialization process. Traditionally the concepts of team work and team play have been valued qualities identified with masculine role behavior. As young boys, American males through their play efforts have been socialized to value the importance of the team. The socialization process of girls, on the other hand, places less emphasis on team play and team work.

Gilligan (1982) addressing this point says:

> From the games they play, boys learn both the independence and the organizational skills necessary for coordinating the activities of large and diverse groups of people. By participating in controlled and socially approved competitive situations, they learn to deal with competition in a relatively forthright manner - to play with their friends - all in accordance with the rules of the game. In contrast, girls' play tends to occur in smaller, more intimate groups, often the best - friend dyad, and in private places. (p. 10)

Thus, because of their limited involvement and restrictions, Harragan (1982) points out that women envision the team concept differently.

> If you ask a group of women what a team is, they will usually say it means: "Everybody should cooperate to get the job done." "Everybody pitches in, doing whatever they can to help others." "Everyone is responsible for the team result, thus, you have to cover for somebody who slacks off." (p. 17)

Men on the other hand, because of their team experience, have been perceived as viewing the team as a more structured organization where functions are prescribed and where each male player fulfills his own responsibility, thus

contributing his unique part to satisfying the goals of the team.

Since the team effort requires cooperation between and dependence upon the membership, trust between members is a highly valued team quality, as Rotter (1967) states,

> One of the most salient factors in the effectiveness of our present complex social organizations is the willingness of one or more individuals in a social unit to trust others. The efficiency, adjustment and even survival of a social group depends upon the presence or absence of such trust.

Thus, when individuals come together to achieve a common team goal, they seek to identify with or enlist in the group, those individuals who having common values, life experiences and interests are most like themselves and can be trusted. As Gips et al. (1984) point out individuals seek conformity with prescribed patterns of behavior and appearance out of their need to reduce uncertainty and to build trust. We need to not only trust our co-decision makers, but we must be able with some certainty predict what they will decide.

Little research has been undertaken on administrative trust, yet it is one of the reasons that male administrators have given for not including women on their administrative team. It is believed by many male administrators that women have a different concept of trust than do men, and that they do not know how to play the team game. Consequently, many of

these male administrators voice reluctance at including women in their ranks. Trust among members of the same sex and between members of the opposite sex is an important factor for positive interpersonal relations and is ideally an integral element for the effective operation of the management team. This study explores the issue of the definition of trust and whether or not men and women conceptualize it differently.

Thus, the purpose of this qualitative research study is to investigate how superintendents and the members of their administrative teams conceptualize the administrative team. This presentation, which represents part of the larger study, will specifically examine how superintendents define and select their administrative teams; how team values are conceptualized by superintendents; how trust is defined and its value perceived by superintendents; and whether or not gender is influential in the superintendents' definitions of both team and the development of trust.

Hopefully, the findings of this study will provide men and women aspiring to membership on the educational administrative "Team at the Top" with an understanding of those behaviors and values, valued by educational administrative team members.

Method

Since the purpose of this study is to examine the ways men and women in public school administration conceptualize the administrative team and explore the implications of these

conceptualizations for practice, the research data for this study was acquired by first conducting interviews with five male and five female superintendents.

In each district the superintendent was interviewed concerning his/her conceptualization of trust; of administrative team; of team work; of team play; of team values; and of team building. Following these interviews all members of the administrative team, as defined by the superintendent, were interviewed on the same issues.

The setting for this study is the adjacent counties of Nassau and Suffolk on Long Island, New York. Nassau County has fifty-six school districts and Suffolk has seventy-eight. To identify those districts where women were serving in administrative capacities, a review of the 1985-86 Directories of Public Schools published by Nassau County and Suffolk County was conducted. This review revealed that sixty-four out of one hundred and thirty-four districts had women serving in administrative positions higher than the position of principal. Of these districts, only seven were administered by women superintendents.

Given the small number of districts administered by female superintendents and the possibility that all seven female superintendents would not agree to participate in the study, the researcher decided that a study of five of the seven superintendencies would provide a large enough sample size.

Because the five selected school districts administered

by the women superintendents varied greatly in size and socio-economic complexion, the researcher decided to specifically select, rather than randomly select, the five school districts administered by male superintendents. By matching the districts according to size and socio-economic patterns, it was expected that the organizational pattern of the administrative teams would be similar and thus provide for greater comparability in the study.

Once the districts were identified, the researcher contacted the superintendents by telephone to provide them with background information and to elicit their willingness to participate in the study. During this conversation an appointment was arranged to meet and interview the superintendents who expressed a willingness to participate in the study. Following the telephone conversation a letter confirming this appointment, and further outlining the purpose and process of the study and offering assurances of confidentiality was sent to each participant.

In the next phase of this study each superintendent was interviewed. During the interview each superintendent was asked a series of questions designed to elicit his/her conceptualization of aspects of the administrative team and the administrative table of organization in their district. The superintendent's identification of the membership of his/her administrative team at this point became the basis for the additional in-depth interviews to be conducted in that district. In total the superintendents identified

forty-four administrators as members of their administrative teams.

Currently, in the third phase of the study each member of the identified team in each school district is being interviewed. Arrangements for these interviews are being made via a written letter of entrance and a follow up telephone call. The written letter of entrance and a confirming telephone call both express the support of the superintendent for this study.

At the interview, each team member is being presented with the same questions asked of the superintendent in order to determine the intra-organizational conceptualization of the team. The data collected will further serve as the basis for the comparative research analysis of the districts being studied.

As interviews are completed the acquired data is being reviewed using theme analysis.

Since the interviews of the forty-four administrators designated as members of the administrative teams by the ten superintendents have not been concluded as of this date, the findings in this paper only reflect the first piece of the larger study. The observations and conclusions drawn are based only on the interviews of the ten superintendents included in the study.

For purposes of confidentiality and anonymity, the five female superintendents and their respective districts are refer ed to as Superintendents F1 - F5. Similarly the

five male superintendents and their districts are referred to as Superintendents M1 - M5.

Administrative Team Membership

An overview of the basic backgrounds of the superintendents reflects the following data. The districts administered by Superintendents F1, F5 and M4 are K-6 districts with less than 2,000 students enrolled. Districts F2, F3, M1, M3 and M5 are k-12 districts with enrollments between 2,000 and 4,000 students. Districts F4 and M2 are k-12 districts with enrollments in excess of 4,000 students.

A comparison of professional experience reflects that the women superintendents have worked in education on an average of 27.8 years while the men have worked an average of 24.4 years. The average number of years the superintendents have worked in their respective districts ranges from 3.6 to thirty years for the women and 1.2 to twenty-seven years for the men. The average number of years in the district for the women totaled twelve years as compared to 9.25 years for the men. In every case, except for one of the women superintendents, the current superintendency was the first and only superintendency held by the subjects in the study. The range of the years of service in this position was from three months to twelve years for the women superintendents and from 1.2 years to eight years for the men. The average number of years in the superintendency was 4.15 years for the women as compared to 3.7 years for the men.

Except for Superintendents F1, F5 and M4, the seven

other superintendents were Assistant Superintendents immediately prior to becoming superintendents. Superintendent F1 was a Superintendent in another district; Superintendent F5 was an Elementary Principal in the same district and Superintendent M4 was a Director of Curriculum & instruction in another district before assuming their current positions. In the case of F5 there was no Assistant Superintendent position in the table of organization when she assumed the superintendency. The position in that district just below Superintendent at that time was Building Principal. Therefore, it is apparent that the Assistant Superintendency was most often the position from which both the male and female members of this sample ascended to the Superintendency. Furthermore, except for Superintendent F1, who moved to her current position from another district Superintendency, all the other female superintendents had worked in the same district prior to receiving their current appointment. On the other hand, three of the five male superintendents came to their current positions from other school districts. This finding raises the question for further study of the likelihood of female school administrators moving to the superintendency from other positions within the district as compared to the likelihood of them assuming the superintendency coming from a lesser administrative position in another district. From the interviews, it appears that these women superintendents were able to move to their current positions based on the

leadership potential they demonstrated in their prior administrative position within the district. This finding certainly supports the premise that women must demonstrate their competency and are more carefully scrutinized and tested before they are appointed to the top leadership role.

One of the primary objectives of the study was to have the superintendents indicate if they employed an administrative team for advisory, consultative and/or decision making purposes, and if in fact they did, which administrators in the district Table of Organization comprised their administrative team.

All ten superintendents indicated that they had an administrative team. Inclusive of the superintendent, the composition of these teams varied in size from a four member team in districts F3, M3 and M5; five member teams in districts F2 and F4; six member teams in districts F1, F5 and M2; and seven member teams in districts M1 and M4. It is interesting to note that Superintendents F1, F5, M1 and M4, who had the smallest student enrollment in their districts, had the largest teams because both central office administrators and building principals were included on their administrative teams. The superintendents in the six larger school districts had smaller administrative teams comprised only of central office administrators.

In explaining the compositions of the teams the superintendents in the smaller districts expressed that, except for their one assistant superintendent, they felt that

the input of building principals was as important as the other central office administrators in the district. Superintendent M4 best expresses this when he states, ".. the principals individually carry as much significance as each central office member does, so when I talk of my administrative team, I'm talking of seven people including the principals and that is very clear not only to me, but to my other administrators . . "

The superintendents in the larger districts, while meeting with all of the administrators in the district on a regular basis, reflect that their administrative teams include only central office administrators for purposes of efficiency. To them inclusion of all administrators in the district on the administrative team for the purposes defined would be unwieldy.

Further analysis of the team membership described by the superintendents revealed that in total there were seventeen male and four female members on the five female superintendent teams and seventeen male and six female members on the five male superintendent teams. Of the twenty-one administrators on the female superintendent administrative teams, sixty-two percent were appointed by the current superintendents, and of the twenty-three administrators on the male superintendent administrative teams sixty-five percent were appointed by the current superintendents.

What is most significant about this data is the fact

that the women superintendents appointed fewer women to administrative team positions than did the male superintendents. Only three of the thirteen or 23% of the administrative team appointments made by the female superintendents were women; whereas five of the fifteen or 33% of the administrative team appointments made by the male superintendents were women. What is even more revealing is the fact that three of the female superintendents with seven vacant administrative team positions appointed only men to these positions. Superintendent F4 with three vacancies and Superintendent F2 with one vacancy maintained their 100% male dominated administrative teams by this action. Superintendent F1 with her three male appointments maintained the ratio of four males to one female on her administrative team by her action. Superintendent F5 with four administrative team vacancies appointed two women and two men, and Superintendent F3 appointed one woman and one man. Even with these appointments these administrative teams had more male than female membership.

On the other hand, everyone of the male superintendents, except for M3, appointed at least one female to a vacant administrative team position. While M3 filled two vacancies with men on his administrative team, the third member on the team was a female. Therefore, everyone of the male superintendent administrative teams had at least one woman on the team.

What is manifested from this data and comments r de by

some of the women superintendents is the fact that there is a conscious awareness on the part of women superintendents to limit the number of women they appoint to administrative positions.

As Superintendent F3 states, "while I seek to employ the most qualified person for the job, that's extremely idealistic because as a female who has just selected another female to an assistant superintendent position, because of the mentality of people, I have to be careful who I pick for my next team member ... Men are very insecure. Let's say if I had all females on my administrative team, my male Board members would want to know what's going on, why do I always pick females ... As a woman I have to be consciously aware of the need to show a balance of males and females ... Men don't have to worry about that. No one is upset if there are all males in the administrative ranks."

Superintendent F4 who does not have a female on her administrative team takes an even more extreme position when she states: "While I think you look for the best person to hire, I think I'd have difficulty if I hired a woman as an Assistant Superintendent ... that would make two women and my instinct would say to me that's not a balance ... There are still people in this town who do not know that I'm a woman because they assume a Doctor is a male. They see the results of what I've done - they hear the name - but they still don't know that I'm a woman. Every once in a while that will pop up, and you realize you're very much an image of what you

project out there ... and people read all sorts of stuff into that. So if I filled the position of my second in command with another woman, that would send out an image that would boggle peoples' minds ... I am very consciously aware of this attitude and would not do it. That would be too much for a community to be able to handle - too big a change ... yet if it were a male, no one would raise the question."

The responses of male superintendents were similar when asked if there should be a balance between men and women on the administrative team. On the whole, they did not believe in establishing balances through a quota system. They felt the best person for the job should be hired. However, unlike the women superintendents, they seemed to be less cautious and more comfortable in expressing a willingness to hire additional female administrative team members. This attitude may be due to the fact that they did not feel threatened because their administrative teams were still overwhelmingly male in membership, or maybe, because of the positive relationships and confidence they had in the women who were currently on or had been on their administrative teams. Furthermore, their action would be perceived as an effort to create greater equal employment opportunity. While this action would be positively viewed by the public, a similar action by the women superintendents would be received as an attempt to show partiality to female candidates.

The comments of Superintendent M4 best encapsulates the sentiments of the male superintendents in the study with

regard to sexual balance in the membership of the administrative team. "I think one should strive for it. We have one female on the administrative team - seven administrators, six men and one woman. I don't think that's right. It doesn't mean that at the next vacancy, I will hire a woman, but it does mean that I will certainly look at female applicants very strongly ... I don't believe in strict quotas; they are artificial, but I believe in affirmative action, you move toward it."

Clearly, this data reflects the perceptions and motivations governing the employment practices and decisions of both male and female superintendents with regard to the membership of the administrative team. The prevailing conscious awareness of what society would think if too many women were administering the organization is as strong, if not stronger, with the few women superintendents who make it to the top, as it is with their male counterparts. This fact alone certainly accounts for the continued limited mobility of women to top educational administrative positions. This finding is certainly consistent with Kanter's (1977) explanation of the factors limiting the mobility of women in corporate management organizations. "Management becomes a closed circle in the absence of better, less exclusionary responses to uncertainty and communication pressures. Forces stemming from organizational situations help foster social homogeneity as a selection criterion for managers and promote social conformity as a standard for conduct." (p. 68)

TABLE 1

COMPARISON OF MALE & FEMALE SUPERINTENDENTS IN STUDY

	# of Years In Ed.	# of Years In Dist.	# of Years as Supt.	Position Prior to Supt.	District of Previous Position	Admin. Team Makeup M	Admin. Team Makeup F	How many Team Appt. made while Supt.	Sex of Team Appt. Made M	Sex of Team Appt. Made F	District Organization	District Enrollment
F 1	20	3.6	3.6	Supt.	Other	4	1	3	3	0	K-6	less than 2,000
F 2	30	30.0	.3	Asst.Supt.	Same	4	0	1	1	0	K-12	2,000 - 4,000
F 3	33	5.0	1.0	Asst.Supt.	Same	2	1	2	1	1	K-12	2,000 - 4,000
F 4	25	7.6	4.0	Asst.Supt.	Same	4	0	3	3	0	K-12	more than 4,000
F 5	31	14.0	12.0	Elem.Prin.	Same	3	2	4	2	2	K-6	less than 2,000
Total Females	27.8	12.0	4.15			17	4	13	10	3		
M 1	28	8.0	8.0	Asst.Supt.	Other	4	2	5	3	2	K-12	2,000 - 4,000
M 2	31	27.0	1.2	Asst.Supt.	Same	4	1	2	1	1	K-12	more than 4,000
M 3	23	3.2	1.2	Asst.Supt.	Same	2	1	2	2	0	K-12	2,000 - 4,000
M 4	15	1.2	1.2	Dir.C & I.	Other	5	1	3	2	1	K-6	less than 2,000
M 5	25	7.0	7.0	Asst.Supt.	Other	2	1	3	2	1	K-12	2,000 - 4,000
Total Males	24.4	9.25	3.7			17	6	15	10	5		

Defining Team & Team Work Process

When asked to provide a literal definition of the term team all ten superintendents provided very similar responses. Their responses were very much in line with this definition provided by Superintendent M1. "A team is a group of people working in a cooperative fashion towards a common goal." While all superintendents valued the administrative team concept and perceived it as goal oriented, how they conceptualized both the process for attaining team goals and the purpose of the team varied.

As stated earlier in this study, it is believed that men and women envision the team work process differently. Team work to women is everybody cooperating to get the job done. "Everybody pitches in doing whatever they can to help others. Everyone is responsible for the team result, thus you have to cover for somebody who slacks off." (Harragan, 1982) For matters of convenience, I shall refer hereafter to this conception as (FCTW) Female Conception of Team Work. Men, on the other hand, because of their team experience, perceive the team as a more structured organization where functions are prescribed and where players fulfill their own responsibility, thus contributing their unique part to satisfying the goals of the team. For matters of convenience, I will refer hereafter to this conception as (MCTW) Male Conception of Team Work. In seeking to identify how the superintendents in this study conceptualized the team work process and to perceive if their conceptualizations were

consistent with the aforementioned descriptions, each superintendent was asked to indicate if he/she perceived the work on the administrative team being done by everybody and the team cooperating and pitching in to help get the job done (FCTW), or if work was accomplished by each player fulfilling his own responsibility (MCTW). To assist in interpreting their responses to these questions a series of questions, to determine the superintendent's frame of reference regarding their athletic team and avocational interests and their family and career background, were posed to the superintendents. The responses to these questions served as the basis for further understanding the origins of the superintendents' conceptualizations of the team work process.

Except for one woman, each of the other nine superintendents participated, to varying degrees, in a competitive athletic team program as a youth. Five of these nine superintendents, F4, F5, M2, M3 and M4 indicated that they were very actively involved in competitive athletic programs. Except for F5, who felt that her athletic team experience only minimally influenced her attitudes toward administrative team work, the other four superintendents in this group indicated that their athletic team experiences strongly influenced the way they conceptualized the administrative team work process. The opinions of these superintendents are reflected in the following statements.

Superintendent M3 states, that "the whole concept of the word team is really applicable to the most common definition

in the area of sports, where the most successful teams are those where participants on a team work together.... Participation and involvement are the keys to success. A team, therefore, is one where people come to meet as leaders of an organization and work cooperatively for the benefit of that organization without any concern for their own vested interest."

Similarly, Superintendent M4 points out that "experience on a team in teenage years really helps you for working with people on a team later on ... whether you're in a leadership role ... or follower role, realizing that you can't do it all helps you in working in an atmosphere where obviously you can't do it all ..."

Probably the clearest analogy to the influence of athletic team participation to administrative team work process was expressed by Superintendent F4 who stated that "the imagery that I use in my working relationship is often drawn from basketball incidents ... Basketball demands people with different expertise working together as a tight group, dropping back and forth depending on what you have to do to achieve your goal ... If it's important that the defense set up the person to make the shots, then everything is organized for that to happen, and so people have to use their expertise to achieve the best way to score and win ..."

Superintendents F1, F2, M1 and M5 expressed that they had limited involvement in competitive athletic programs as

youngsters, and that these experiences did not influence their conceptualization of the administrative team work process. In describing the factors that influenced their conception of the administrative team work process, these superintendents alluded to career experiences. Superintendents M1 and M5 both expressed that their prior experience as Assistant Superintendents on Administrative Teams in other districts most influenced their conceptualization of the administrative team work process. The following statement by Superintendent M5 reflects this attitude, "I suspect my training, if you will, in my prior district provided me with enough autonomy that I could work with the superintendent in a manner that did not give me the feeling that I was working for someone, but rather with someone. It wasn't that he was the boss and I was one of the underlings."

Similarly the attitudes of Superintendents F1 and F2 are expressed in the following statement by Superintendent F1. "I don't think that I'm unusual from a female perspective. I think my attitude toward the team approach developed as a function of my working in groups throughout the many levels of my career. That's where I've gotten the training and that's also where I've gotten my philosophy about that kind of approach."

Superintendent F3, the only subject in the sample not to have any competitive athletic team experience, indicates that her conceptualization of the team work process developed from

her early years as a family member and later as the head of her household. She also expressed that her participation in church choirs and theatrical productions, like Superintendent F2, influenced her conception of team work.

Given this data regarding "the origins of the superintendents' conceptualization of team work, let us now look at how the superintendents responded when they were asked to describe how team work was conducted on their administrative teams. Did they define team and the team work process from the perspective of the FCTW or the MCTW? While most superintendents expressed some elements of both perspectives in their conceptualization, some leaned more in one direction than another, and others truly combined the elements of both.

The conceptualizations of Superintendents F1, F5 and M5 appeared to be most consistent with the FCTW. The following excerpts from the transcripts of these superintendents reveals this position.

According to Superintendent F5, "a team is a group that throws around an idea, brainstorms and comes up with some viable solution or alternate way of doing something. If there is a problem we all pitch in and solve it. If there is a problem in one school, everyone works together regardless of title to get one particular job done."

Superintendent M5 states, "We use a team approach in central administration. Therefore, virtually every issue is discussed at our daily 9:30 A.M. meeting. It's a problem

solving meeting, anticipation of problems meeting, resolutions of problems meeting - it's a crucial part of administration in this district ... that a person is Assistant Superintendent of Business in no way diminishes his involvement in issues beyond business just as some of the business decisions are handled and discussed by the Assistant Superintendent of Schools ... If we function as a team, and we do, what happens is that each of us tend to rely on one another and feel comfortable that the support that will come to us will come because we acted as a unit."

Similarly Superintendent F1 states. "I try to secure the input of all team members ... we will identify as a team things that need to be accomplished in the school district and an agreed upon procedure ... then one; two or three individuals will be given the responsibility to carry it through and report back ... our discussions do not exclude individuals ... sometimes the perspective of somebody who is not intimately involved with something is useful in looking at a particular problem."

While the seven remaining superintendents appeared to lean more in the direction of the MCTW, in their conceptualization of their administrative teams, Superintendents F3 and F2, who appeared to have the least structured administrative teams, defined their teams most closely to the MCTW.

According to Superintendent F3, who coincidently is the only superintendent in the group wh did not have a

competitive athletic team experience, "Each team member has a specific task to do; our purpose in getting together is to make sure that there is coordination and communication and we are not off doing something someone else should be doing ... Each one has a specific area of competency and responsibility and I expect them to carry through on that ... I don't see how coming together to work on one task helps the organization ..."

Superintendent F2 provided this explanation, "You may be in charge of a particular bailiwick which I want o have run in a well oiled way, but by the same token, we are all responsible for the district in total ... We have our Thursday morning meetings for the purpose of each of us updating the other on what is going on in the individual department areas ... and I think that's what's important - that we all know what is going on ..."

While the statements of Superintendents F4, M1, M2, M3 and M4 reflect that they perceive the operation of the team more in line with the MCTW, they do express, to varying degrees, that there are times when certain aspects of the FCTW are appropriate.

The comments by Superintendents M2 and M4 best express this position.

Superintendent M2 states, "I think the team is a group of people who each can contribute some unique contribution to the school district, but yet who, collectively see what has to be done for the district and can add a re ommendation to

the superintendent. Any one of these people, although they're experts in their own field, when we have a cabinet meeting, adds their decisions."

Superintendent M4 further captures the sentiments of this group when he compares the MCTW with the FCTW. "Look for a combination of the two." "Any school system in my judgment that sets up its team in either of those extremes would fail miserably. A school system which has a strict hierarchical structure where key members are not allowed to participate beyond the scope of their job description is one hat will remain relatively stagnant. It is a team that can maintain status quo at best and not grow. A team where all its members participate in all its decisions is a team that chases after its own tail. I can't imagine a team really getting things done and bringing things to closure in a timely manner, with everybody participating in each decision until it's complete."

While participation on a competitive team sport as a youngster was considered a factor that affected the conceptualization of administrative team work, the responses showed that while nine of the ten superintendents participated on team sports as youngsters, only four saw a clear parallel between this participation and their conceptualization of the administrative team work process. Evaluation of the comments of the forty-four administrative team members now under study should provide a more definitive conclusion with regard to this analysis.

Clearly one can see from the data presented on the origins of the superintendents' conceptualization of the team work process and the superintendents' expression of their conceptualization of their administrative teams and the team work process that neither the men nor the women superintendents, as distinct groups, all fall in line with either FCTW or MCTW.

What is most revealing about these findings is that while most superintendents, both females and males, lean towards the MCTW, they also see the value in and need to employ elements of the FCTW in the operation of the administrative team. Certain situations clearly require the FCTW where the administrative team all come together to pitch in and work on resolving one particular problem. Whether these facts, as presented by the superintendents, are in fact what exists on the district teams, or are prejudiced perceptions of the superintendents will be further elucidated in the responses the members of the administrative teams provide in their interviews.

The Superintendents' Conceptualizations of Trust

Kanter (1977), in her observations of the operation of the corporate management team, pointed out that the reason for the absences of women in top managerial positions was due to the fact that administrators brought to their management teams those individuals they believed they could trust. She states:

Concerned about giving up control and broadening

> discretion in the organization, managers choose others that can be trusted. And thus they reproduce themselves in kind. Women are occasionally included in the inner circle when they are part of an organization's ruling family, but more usually this system leaves women out, along with a range of other people with discrepant social characteristics. Forces insisting that trust means total dedication and nondiffuse loyalty also serve to exclude those like women, who are s en as incapable of such a single minded attachment. (p. 68)

Given this description and the relative absence of women on public education administrative teams, one of the objectives of this study was to determine the role of trust in the conceptualization of the administrative team. To ascertain this information the researcher asked the superintendents to define trust; to explain the extent to which they perceived trust as an important team value; to express their feelings of trust or distrust of members of their team; and finally to indicate and explain any patterns of trust or distrust they perceived among members of their administrative team. In this paper only the first two questions will be addressed.

Rotter (1967) defines interpersonal trust as an expectancy held by an individual that the word, promise or written statement of another individual or group can be relied on. Using this definition as the basis of comparison,

the following were the responses of the superintendents when they were asked, without being given any frame of reference, to literally define the term trust.

The definitions provided by Superintendents F3, F4, and M4 clearly indicated that they saw trust as a reliance or confidence in other people or team members to say or do what they said they were going to say or do. Trust to them is the belief that the people they work with have integrity and can be relied upon to do and say the right thing. The following are the definitions provided by these superintendents.

Superintendent F3: "Trust is confidence one has in another to do a job competently."

Superintendent F4: Says that "trust is the ability to depend on another person; it is the ability to know and anticipate what a person is going to think and do, and then, if you know that, you can lean on them."

Superintendent M4: "Trust is being predictable, accountable and reliable."

While these superintendents perceived trust as the confidence of knowing that they could rely on trusted others to speak, perform and act in an appropriate manner, Superintendents F2, M1, M2, M3 and M5 saw trust more along the lines of their ability to say what they wished to say, confident that the persons they were sharing their thoughts and opinions with, would not ridicule or repeat these thoughts elsewhere.

The following statements are examples of the definitions

provided by superintendents in this group.

Superintendent F2 states: Trust is "being comfortable with a person. It is sharing my thoughts, knowing that what I shared is not ridiculed, away from my presence. If one of the people chooses to take those things that I've shared away from this room and examine and ridicule them with others then trust is not there."

Similarly, Superintendent M1 states, "Trust is the comfort that I can say what's on my mind in anyway necessary in a team and that what I'm saying will remain with t. group."

Superintendent M2: "Trust is the belief that what is said in confidence remains in confidence."

Superintendents F1 and F5 expressed both of these interpretations of the team in their definitions. Accordingly, Superintendent F1 states, "Trust is a feeling that you can say what you need to say and the information is not going to be used against you somewhere else ... It is confidence in knowing how another individual is going to handle any information you might give them."

Superintendent F5 states, "If you tell a group something in confidence it will stay there ... Trust is somehow knowing that people will do whatever you expect them to do without even being told, because you have confidence in them."

In summary, it appears that the definitions of the female superintendents were more closely in line with the definitions provided by Rotter. To rely on others to do and say the right thing is the basis of trust for them. The

definitions of most of the male superintendents, on the other hand, emphasized their desire to be comfortable and open in saying and doing whatever they wanted to at team meetings, believing that their statements would not be repeated by team members beyond the confines of the meeting room. This definition of trust is certainly consistent with the stereotypical male conception of the "closed circle" of management. Only those inside the management circle who are tried and true can be trusted not to betray the confidence of the group. That behavior made for good team play.

In general the responses of the women gave the impression that they were more open and willing to confide in more people. The men, on the other hand, seemed willing to trust only those most close to them; only those on the team.

In seeking to identify the importance of trust as a team value all of the superintendents were asked to identify the characteristics the ideal administrative management team would possess, and those qualities or characteristics an ideal administrative team member would possess.

Without exception all the superintendents responded that trust was an important team value. Expertise, competency and loyalty also were among the responses most often given. However, when queried as to what value they believed was most important for the operation of the team, a most interesting dichotomy in the responses between the male and female superintendents was revealed. While both groups perceived competency and trust as the most important team values the

men expressed trust as the most important team value, while the women clearly indicated competency and expertise to do the required work as the most important values.

The following statements by the superintendents illustrate this dichotomy.

Superintendent F3 states, "the most important team quality is expertise. Whatever area that person is in charge of I can respect you if you have expertise, you can be warm, compassionate or kind, but if you're a dummy and you don't know how to do your job, you're not a good team . mber."

Superintendent F5 indicated that the most important quality for the success of the team is "the willingness to do the work and not slack off."

While struggling to establish an order of importance, Superintendent F1 finally stated that "competence, trust and diversity" were the three most important characteristics of the ideal administrative team. There has to be competence on the part of the people in their respective roles ... I could function if I only had the competence."

Superintendent F4 perceived "expertise, but more important, a respect and fascination for different expertise as the most important team quality. The characteristic I try to find when I'm hiring people is that most of them have innate value in doing what they think is good education."

Superintendent F2 states "competency is terribly important. I expect you to know your job ... That's a given. I think everybody is entitled to make a mistake.

Just don't make the same mistake again." While her statement about competency was very strong, her sentiments about trust as an important team quality were equally strong. Therefore, I did not place her firmly in one or the other groups.

The male superintendents expressed the following sentiments about the importance of trust as a team value.

Superintendent M5 states, "It's crucial. It's impossible for a team to be meaningful without trust. In a way, I guess a team is a professional marriage almost. Marriage without trust and teams without trust just don't work."

Superintendent M1 - "If they didn't trust each other, then they wouldn't be as free in their conversation, and they probably wouldn't give the best input. They probably wouldn't be functioning at their highest level when they function as a team."

Superintendents M2 and M3 indicate that competency is an important underlying quality to team success. They see it more as a given because they feel that only competent administrators would reach the level of competency to be functioning on the team. However, if the team was to really function effectively trust must be a priority between the team members.

Superintendent M3 states - "I think that the members of the team have to trust each other and that the team concept has to be built on the confidence and trust that people have for each other. I don't think people are going to be very

open with their thoughts if they don't trust the people on the team. They'll participate in a minimal way, they will make comments that they feel are not controversial or that are safe."

Superintendent M2 states, "Competency and a certain degree of intelligence, I would say, just come with the territory, but then above and beyond that, I think trust and loyalty are the two that would fit in as the most important team qualities.

While making reference to trust as an impor ıt team value, Superintendent M4 stresses the "respect for everyone's opinion" as one of the most important team values - from his perspective. Therefore, I did not place him in one or the other groups.

In evaluating both the male and female superintendents' definitions of trust and their perceptions of trust as an important team value, differences in their conceptualizations were revealed.

While the definition of trust may differ somewhat between men and women, trust between team members is perceived by all the superintendents as an important characteristic of the administrative team.

What is most revealing, however, is the degree to which the men and women superintendents perceive trust as an important administrative team quality. The male superintendents very clearly and quite emphatically in the interviews expressed the importance of trust as the most

important team value. To them trust was the ingredient that cemented the team together. The women, on the other hand, stressed the importance of competence, expertise and hard work as the most important team quality. To them the success of the team depended upon the ability and the capacity of their team players to get the job done. If we, once again, look at the definition of trust presented by most of the women, we find the emphasis in their conceptualization on their reliance and/or confidence in other team members to say or do what they said they were going to say and . Thus, there is continuity between their definition of trust, which is expressed in "doing what you say or are expected to do" and their perception of "competency" or doing and saying what your role expects of you.

Given this interpretation two major points are manifested. First, the fact that these women superintendents did not define trust or value it as a team quality to the extent that the men did, lends understanding to the reason behind the male dominated administrative teams exclusion or allowing only token female membership on the team. Is it safe to admit women who do not conceptualize trust as the most important team value, to membership on the male dominated administrative team?

Second, the fact that the women perceived competency and hard work as the most important team quality, lends credence to the perception that women administrators have to work twice as hard to prove, by their achievements, their capacity

to succeed in the male dominated world of educational administration. Given this explanation, one can more clearly understand why the female superintendents would value competency. Since her performance and administrative organization are so carefully scrutinized, proving competence by achievement becomes the primary objective of her administration. Therefore, it is understandable why the female superintendent values having competent administrators on her team, and why she stresses competency, expertise and hard work as the primary team value. As Superintendent F3 expressed, "You can have a high degree of trust in your team, but if everyone is incompetent, you and the team will fail."

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